Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 11416 01 OF 03 271233Z

44
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7461
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
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PAGE 02 PHNOM 11416 01 OF 03 271233Z

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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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COMSEVENTHFLT
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COMUSSAG
III MAF
CINCPACAF
CTG SEVEN NINE PT FOUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 11416

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, PFOR, MOPS, ECON, GB
SUBJECT: KHMER REPORT -- AUGUST 27, 1974

GENERAL

1. PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET JOURNEYED ABROAD AGAIN DURING THE WEEK, THIS TIME TO SAUDI ARABIA, AS THE GKR CONTINUED ITS INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO MUSTER SUPPORT PRIOR TO THE 29TH UNGA SESSION. POLITICALLY IT WAS A QUITE WEEK IN PHNOM PENH AS THE TEACHER/STUDENT PROTEST MOVEMENT CONTINUED TO SIMMER, BUT AT A LOW LEVEL FOR THE TIME BEING. BOTH SIDES STEPPED UP THEIR MILITARY ACTIVITIES DESPITE THE ONSET OF HEAVIER RAINS. FANK LAUNCHED A LARGE OPERTION TO CLEAN OUT THE AREA BETWEEN THE MEKONG AND BASSAC RIVERS SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH WITH LIEELT PROGRESS INITIALLY, WHILE THE KG EXERTED PRESSURE IN THEIR CUSTOMARY AREAS OF LATE, ALONG ROUTE 4 AND IN BATTAMBANG PROVINCE. SIHANOUK TRAVELLED TO BUCHAREST WHICH GAVE HIM THE OCCASION TO TROT OUT SOME STANDARD ANTI-AMERICAN RHETORIC, AND THE FUNK "IN-COUNTRY" PROPAGANDA APPARATUS TRIED TO POUR COLD WATER ON THE GKR'S DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS BY CLAIMING REPEATEDLY THAT THE LON NOL GOVERNMENT IS BECOMING STEADILY MORE ISOLATED INTERNATIONALLY.
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PAGE 03 PHNOM 11416 01 OF 03 271233Z

POLITICAL (INTERNAL)

2. FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EDUCATION PAN SOTHI RETURNED TO PHNOM PENH AUGUST 21 FROM A MISSION ABROAD TO FIND THE STUDENT/TEACHER PROTEST SITUATION RELATIVELY QUIET (SEE LAST WEEK'S KHMER REPORT). HOWEVER, THERE ARE TWO ISSUES AT PRESENT WHICH ARE CAUSING SOME RUMBLINGS OF DISCONTENT AMONG STUDENTS

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

AND TEACHERS: (A) THE GKR DECISION TO "EXILE" TEACHER STRIKE COMMITTEE LEADERS REAM YOSSAR AND PAN MANIL TO SVAY RIENG AND KOMPONG THOM, RESPECTIVELY, TO TAKE UP TEACHING POSITIONS THERE (THIS HAS BEEN PROTESTED BY SEVERAL TEACHERS GROUPS AND THE TWO MEN HAVE NOT LEFT PHNOM PENH); AND (B) THE CONTINUED IMPRISONMENT OF SOME SEVEN STUDENTS WHO, ACCORDING TO LOCAL PRESS REPORTS, HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING AN OFF-AND-ON HUNGER STRIKE FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS. COMMENT: THESE TWO ISSUES DO NOT SEEM AT THE MOMENT LIKELY TO PROVOKE A SERIOUS CLASH BETWEEN THE GKR AND THE PROTESTERS BUT COULD PROVE MORE TROUBLESOME IN THE FUTURE. END COMMENT.

3. THE GKR HAS, BY OFFICIAL DECREE, DECLARED FORMER MINISTER OF EDUCATION KEO SANGKIM AND PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR THACH CHIA TO BE NATIONAL HEROS. (THEY WERE SEIZED BY PROTESTING STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ON JUNE 4 AND ASSASSINATED BY A COMMUNIST CADRE LATER THE SAME DAY -- SEE KHMER REPORT OF JUNE 4). THE CHILDREN OF THE TWO MEN ARE NOW WARDS OF THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR EDUCATION IN A FASHION TO BE DETERMINED BY PRESIDENT LON NOL.

POLITICAL (EXTERNAL)

4. PRIME MINISTER LONG BORET WAS ON THE ROAD AGAIN THIS WEEK, THIS TIME TO SAUDI ARABIA, AND PERHAPS SOME OTHER ARAB CAPITALS. HE LEFT PHNOM PENH AUG. 23, ACCOMPANIED BY MINISTER OF INFORMATION CHHANG SONG AND ROVING AMBASSADOR GENERAL SAK SUTSAKHAN THE DELEGATION ARRIVED IN JIDDA AUGUST 25. THE GKR HAS BEEN TRYING TO ARRANGE THIS TRIP FOR SOME TIME IN THE HOPE THAT WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF THE SAUDIS IT CAN WIN GREATER
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SUPPORT IN THE ARAB WORLD. THE PRIME MINISTER IS TO SEE KING FAISAL DURING HIS STAY IN JIDDA AND WILL TRY TO ARRANGE ONWARD VISITS TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

5. FOREIGN MINISTER KEUKY LIM CONTINUED HIS AFRICAN TRAVELS AS WELL, COMPLETING A VISIT TO LIBERIA, WHERE HE CONFERRED WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT AND FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS.

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 11416 02 OF 03 271225Z

44
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

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PAGE 02 PHNOM 11416 02 OF 03 271225Z

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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 11416

6. THE GKR HAS SENT A DELEGATION HEADED BY THE GKR PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE IN GENEVA, SO SATTA, AND FORMER PRIME MINISTER HANG THUN HAK TOTHE AUGUST 19-30 WORLD POPULATION CONFERENCE IN BUCHAREST. THERE HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION ABOUT GKR/ GRUNK CONTACTS IN BUCHAREST, POSSIBLY FACILITIATED BY THE ROMANIANS, BUT THE GKR DELEGATION HAS TOLD EMBASSY BUCHAREST THAT NOTHING OF THE KIND HAS YET MATERIAL- IZED. (SIHANOUK ARRIVED IN BUCHAREST AUGUST 20 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ROMANIAN 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELE- BRATION ((SEE BELOW)) BUT DID NOT ATTEMPT TO CHALLENGE THE GKR AT THE CONFERENCE.) THE FIRST MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE TOOK PLACE ON AUGUST 26 AND THE PRC DELIVERED A STRONG STATEMENT SUPPORTING RUNK ATTENDANCE; THIS WAS REBUTTED BY THE U.S. AND SEVERAL OTHERS WHO POINTED OUT THIS ISSUE DID NOT FALL WITHIN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE. THE COMMITTEE IS SCHEDULED TO MEET AGAIN AUGUST 27 AND A FORMAL CHALLENGE ON KHMER CREDENTIALS MIGHT OCCUR AT THAT TIME.

7. THE MEETING OF ASEAN DEPUTY SECRETARIES GENERAL IN KUALA LIMPUR AUGUST 19-20 (SEE LAST WEEK'S KHMER REPORT) DID DISCUSS THE KHMER UN CREDENTIALS PROBLEM AT SOME LENGTH. THE INDONESIAN DELEGATE REPORTEDLY CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PHNOM 11416 02 OF 03 271225Z

SOUGHT AN ASEAN CONSENSUS ON HIS GOVERNMENT'S PRO- POSAL TO SEEK ESTABLISHMENT OF A UN FACT-FINDING OR STUDY COMMITTEE TO HEAD OFF PASSAGE OF THE RESOLUTION TO SEAT GRUNK AT THE 29TH UNGA. THE DELEGATES TO THE CONFERENCE AGREED TO INFORM THEIR RESPECTIVE GOVERN- MENTS OF THE PROPOSAL.

8. THE GKR HAS MADE PUBLIC THE FACT THAT IT WILL

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

SEND ON AUGUST 27 A GROUP OF FOURTEEN ATHLETES AND OFFICIALS TO THE ASIAN GAMES IN TEHERAN. IN ITS ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE PRESS, THE GKR NOTED THAT ITS RIGHT TO REPRESENT CAMBODIA HAD BEEN CHALLENGED BY GRUNK BUT UPHELD BY THE ASIAN GAMES COMMITTEE.

GRUNK/FUNK

9. SIHANOUK, ACCOMPANIED BY HIS WIFE MONIQUE, ARRIVED IN BUCHAREST AUGUST 20 TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ROMANIAN "LIBERATION", AND AFTER THE USUAL ROUND OF BANQUETS, MEETINGS AND A CALL ON PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU, RETURNED TO PEKING ON AUGUST 25. IN HIS STATEMENTS DURING THE VISIT, SIHANOUK CRITICIZED THE U.S. IN HARSH TERMS, SAYING THAT THE "CAMBODIAN PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT AND DUTY" TO FREE THEMSELVES FROM "U.S. IMPERIALIST DOMINATION AND LON NOL FASCISM". IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE NEW YORK TIMES IN BUCHAREST, SIHANOUK REPORTEDLY CALLED AGAIN FOR AN END TO AMERICAN AID TO THE GKR, PREDICTED A KC MILITARY VICTORY IN "ONE OR TWO YEARS," AND SAID THAT GRUNK HAD AN "80 PERCENT CHANCE" OF WINNING THE CAMBODIAN SEAT IN THE UN THIS YEAR. HE ALSO ALLEGED THAT HE HAD GIVEN UP POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN CAMBODIA AND WOULD BE CONTENT WITH A REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE WHEN THE "KHMER ROUGE" COME TO POWER.

10. POSSIBLY IN REACTION TO THE STEPPED UP TEMPO OF GKR DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY, FUNK PROPAGANDA DEVOTED CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION TO ITS VERSION OF THE INTERNATIONAL STATE OF PLAY. IT ALLEGED THE COMPLETE COLLAPSE OF SEATO AND ASEAN, THE GROWING ISOLATION OF THE "IMPERIALISTS AND THEIR LACKEYS" AS EVIDENCED BY THE LAW

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PAGE 04 PHNOM 11416 02 OF 03 271225Z

OF THE SEA CONFERENCE, AND CLAIMED THAT WHEN THE "TRAITORS" LONG BORET AND KEUKY LIM TRAVEL ABROAD THEY "IMMEDIATELY" GO TO "PUPPET COUNTRIES OF THE U.S. IMPERIALISTS TO ASK THEM FOR HELP". WHILE NOT DARING TO PREDICT VICTORY THIS YEAR AT THE UN, THE RADIO ASCRIBED GRUNK'S SETBACK LAST YEAR TO U.S. "CRUEL INFLUENCE" AND BRAGGED THAT OVER 60 COUNTRIES OFFICIALLY RECOGNIZE GRUNK (NOTE: THIS ESTIMATE IS INFLATED). IN OTHER BROADCASTS, FUNK PROPAGANDA DESCRIBED LON NOL ON AUGUST 15 AS APPEALING IN "AGONG" WITH HIS "SEPULCHRAL VOICE" FOR NEGOTIATIONS AND URGED THE COAMBODIAN PEOPLE IN GKR AREAS TO CONTINUE THE STRUGGLE AND "SHATTER THE PHONEY MANEUVERS ABOUT NEGOTIATIONS".

ECONOMIC

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

11. RETAIL PRICES WERE MIXED ON PHNOM PENH MARKETS DURING THE WEEK. RICE, BEEF, MILK AND CHARCOAL WERE UP SLIGHTLY; FRESH WATER FISH, OCEAN FISH, CAULIFLOWER, LOCAL POTATOES AND SALT SHOWED MODEST DECLINES. THE PRICES OF MOST OTHER GOODS REMAINED RELATIVELY STABLE EXCEPT FOR CERTAIN SEASONAL GARDEN VEGETABLES SUCH AS SWEET PEPPER AND LOCAL CARROTS, WHICH INCREASED BY 67 PERCENT AND 76 PERCENT RESPECTIVELY DURING THE WEEK. THE FREE MARKET RATE FOR THE U.S. DOLLAR WAS 1,150 RIELS PER DOLLAR AT THE END OF THE WEEK, COMPARED TO 1,050 AT THE BEGINNING.

12. AS OF AUGUST 25 PHNOM PENH OFFICIAL RICE STOCKS

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 01 PHNOM 11416 03 OF 03 271244Z

44
ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ARA-16 EUR-25 NEA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

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AMZMBASSY CANBERRA 1026
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

AMEMBASSY RANGOON
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 PHNOM PENH 11416

TOTALLED 43,460 M/T OR A 56-DAY SUPPLY. LAST WEEK A MEKONG CONVOY BROUGHT IN 2,280 M/T, AND TWO USAID-CHARTERED BARGES ON THE TONLE SAP BROUGHT IN 1,000 M/T OF BATTAMBANG RICE.

MILITARY

13. ON AUGUST 21 A SIZEABLE FANK FORCE COMPOSED OF SIX BRIGADES AND OTHER ELEMENTS KICKED OFF THE FIRST MAJOR OFFENSIVE OF THE RAINY SEASON IN THE BASSAC RIVER CORRIDOR SOUTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH. THE OBJECTIVE IS TO ELIMINATE THE THREAT OF ROCKETS FROM THAT SECTOR AND

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

TO ESTABLISH A NEW DEFENSIVE LINE BETWEEN ROUTE 1 AND
THE BASSAC. THE ON-GOING OPERATION HAS HAD DISAPPOINT-
ING RESULTS TO DATE BECAUSE OF HEAVY RAINS WHICH HAVE
MADE OPERATIONS DIFFICULT AND BECAUSE OF STIFF ENEMY
RESISTANCE. FRIENDLY FORCES DID, HOWEVER, SUCCEED IN
ESTABLISHING A BEACHHEAD ON AN IMPORTANT ISLAND IN THE
BASSAC RIVER, KILLING 100 ENEMY SOLDIERS AND CAPTURING
60 WEAPONS IN THE PROCESS. ELSEWHERE IN PHNOM PENH'S
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 PHNOM 11416 03 OF 03 271244Z

ENVIRONS, THE KC FIRED FOUR 107MM ROCKETS AT AN
AMMUNITION DEPOT FOUR KILOMETERS WEST OF POCHENTONG
AIRFIELD. THE ROCKETS MISSED THE DEPOT AND DID NO
DAMAGE, BUT THEIR PROXIMITY TO SUCH AN IMPORTANT IN-
STALLATION RESULTED IN FANK SWEEP OPERATIONS IN EFFORTS
TO EXTEND THE DEFENSIVE PERIMATERS AROUND THE CAPITAL
TO THE NORTHWEST AND SOUTHWEST. AT PREK TAMERK,
NORTHEAST OF PHNOM PENH ACROSS THE MEKONG, TWO HEAVY
ENEMY ATTACKS WERE REPULSED WITH 75 KC SOLDIERS KILLED
AND 46 WEAPONS CAPTURED. FANK LOSSES WERE LIGHT.

14. KC TROOPS INTERDICTED ROUTE 4 SOME 30 KILOMETERS
SOUTHWEST OF KOMPONG SPEU AND SUCCEEDED IN ISLOLATING
THE IMPORTANT GARRISON OF DAS KANCHOR. ON AUGUST 26
GOVERNMENT FORCES BEGAN AN OPERAION TO REOPEN THIS
PORTION OF THE ROAD, BUT TO DATE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO
BREAK THROUGH. IN SOUTHWESTERN CAMBODIA AT KOMPONG SOM,
THE COMMUNISTS INTERDICTED THE RAOD LADING NORTH FROM
THE CITY, BUT FANK REOPEND IT SEVERAL DAYS LATER.
NEARBY, GOVERNMENT GROOOS MADE SOME PROGRESS ALONG SOUTHERN
ROUTE 4. PUSHING FORWARD ONE KILOMETER TOWARD O CHAMNA
LOCATED 14 KILOMTERS EAST OF REAM AIR BASE.

15. THE KC ARE PERSISTING IN THEIR CAMPAIGN OF
HARASSMENT AND LOW-LEVEL ATTACKS IN BATTAMBANG PROVINCE.
ON AUGUST 20, FOR EXAMPLE, FOUR SMALL OUTPOSTS LOCATED
SOME 35 KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF BATTAMBANG CITY AND
MANNED BY SELF-DEFENSE FORCES WERE OVERRUN; FRIENDLY
LOSSES WERE 34 KILLED, 23 MISSING AND 70 HOMES BURNED.
IN ADDITION, THE OUTPOST OF KOH KRALOR, SOUTH OF
BATTAMBANG AND PREVIOUSLY THE SUBJECT OF KC ATTACKS,
WAS ON AUGUST 26 REPORTED TO HAVE BEEN AGAIN ENCIRCLED
BY AN ENEMY FORCE. AT SIEM REAP, FANK LAUNCHED A
MULTI-BATTALION OPERATION EAST OF THE CITY WHICH HAS
TO DATE SECURED SEVERAL OBJECTIVES; LOSSES ON BOTH
SIDES THUS FAR HAVE BEEN LGITH.

16. THE KHMER AIR FORCE ATTACKED AN ENEMY SUPPLY AREA
30 KILOMETERS NORTHEAST OF KOMPONG THOM ON AUGUST 25
AND REPORTED SEVERAL LARGE SECONDARY EXPLOSIONS,

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

PROBABLY FROM AMMUNITION STORES. A MEKONG CONVOY
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ARRIVED IN PHNOM PENH ON AUGUST 25; ATTACKS BY FIRE
EN ROUTE RESULTED IN TWO SHIPS BEING HIT BUT WITHOUT
SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE TO EITHER OF THE SHIPS OR THEIR
CARGO.
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Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

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EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

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